

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 05416 152325Z

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T HONG KONG 5416

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: CONTROVERSY OVER REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES

REF: 1973 HONGKONG 12577

SUMMARY. REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES SEEM TO BE MAKING A COMEBACK
AS ORGANS OF POWER. PEOPLE'S DAILY HAS PRAISED THE COMMITTEES
AND WARNED THAT "HOSTILE" ELEMENTS ARE STILL SEEKING TO "NEGATE"

THEIR ROLE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE FUTURE OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES
WHICH HAS BEEN RAGING IN THE PROVINCES (WR 19, 18), HAS NOW HIT
PRINT IN PEOPLE'S DAILY. IN A MAY 5 ARTICLE ON SACRED "NEWBORN
THINGS" OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, THE PRC'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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SECRET

PAGE 02 HONG K 05416 152325Z

CHARGES THAT "FORCES OF RESTORATION" IN CHINA ARE "PARTICULARLY

HOSTILE" TOWARD REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES, ESPECIALLY TOWARD YOUNG AND MASS REPRESENTATIVES ON THE COMMITTEES. APPARENTLY THE CENTER HAS NOW DETERMINED THAT REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES WILL BE USED TO PUSH YOUNGER ACTIVISTS INTO POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY.

2. THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES WERE FIRST ESTABLISHED IN 1967-68, AS A PART OF CHINA'S EFFORT TO RESTORE ORDER IN ITS VIOLENTLY DISRUPTED PROVINCES. CONCEIVED AS A THREE-WAY ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE MILITARY, SURVIVING GOVERNMENT AND PARTY CADRE, AND THE NEW CULTURAL REVOLUTION ACTIVISTS, MOST PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES RAPIDLY CAME UNDER PLA-VERTERAN CADRE CONTROL. THE NEW "MASS REPRESENTATIVES" WERE QUICKLY EASED OUT OF THE POWER PICTURE.

3. AFTER THE PLA AND PARTY VETERANS WHO DOMINATED THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES TOOK OVER THEIR REESTABLISHED PROVINCIAL PARTY STURCTURE IN 1970-71, THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES SEEMED TO BECOME REDUNDANT. UNSURPRISINGLY, MANY LOW-LEVEL REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES WERE ABOLISHED IN 1972-73 OTHERS BECAME IDENTICAL TO THE LOCAL PARTY COMMITTEES. THE COMMITTEES HAD BEEN CALLED "TEMPORARY" BY EVEN MAO, AND THEY SEEMED OUT OF PLACE ONCE NORMALCY HAD RETURNED TO CHINA. LAST AUGUST, THEY WERE IMPORTANTLY LEFT OFF PREMIER CHOU'S TENTH PARTY CONGRESS LIST OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION "NEWBORN THINGS."

4. FOR REASONS UNKNOWN AT THE TIME, WANG HUNG-WEN, IN HIS CONGRESS REPORT, WORRIED ABOUT THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES' FUTURE, SAYING IT WAS NECESSARY TO GIVE "FULL PLAY" TO THEIR ROLE. IN A DECEMBER AMENDMENT TO CHOU'S AUGUST REMARKS, NCNA SANCTIFIED REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES AS ONE OF THE "NEWBORN THINGS" (REFTEL. THE MOVEMENT FOLLOWED IN FEBRUARY, AND NOW PEOPLE'S DAILY HAS CLARIFIED THE WORTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES: THEY PROVIDE CULTURAL REVOLUTION ACTIVISTS A SHARE OF POWER.

5. THE LEFT SEEMS BEHIND THE PEOPLE'S DAILY ARTICLE, AND BEHIND THE COMMITTEES IN GENERAL. AS THEY ARE NOW CONCEIVED, THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES COMBINE OLD, MIDDLE AGED, AND YOUNG CADRE; PARTY AND MASS REPRESENTATIVES. (REFERENCE TO THE ORIGINAL THREE-WAY ALLIANCE OF CADRE, PLA, AND MASS REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN DROPPED ALONG WITH THE ARMYMEN WHO FORMERLY SERVED ON THE COMMITTEES, BUT PARTY AND MASS REPRESENTATIVES APPARENTLY CONTINUE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 HONG K 05416 152325Z

TO SHARE POWER; WR 18).

6. LEFTISTS SEEM PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES AS A VEHICLE FOR EDGING THEIR FORCES TOWARD POWER. THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES TECHNICALLY SUPERVISE THE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY IN THE PROVINCES AND EFFORTS TO GAIN CONTROL OVER PROVINCIAL OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANS LIKELY FIGURE IN CURRENT CONTROVERSY OVER THE COMMITTEES' FUTURE. ULTIMATELY, THOSE WHO

COME TO DOMINATE THE GOVERNMENT OF A PROVINCE OR AREA MAY WELL
THEN DOMINATE THE PARTY COMMITTEE IN THAT AREA.

7. IN ANY CASE, RECENT EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE THE REVOLUTIONARY
COMMITTEES HAVE MET STIFF OPPOSITION BOTH IN THE PROVINCES AND
AT THE CENTER (WR 19). THIS OPPOSITION HAS APPARENTLY PROMPTED
PEOPLE'S DAILY TO ATTACK PERSONS WHO WANT THE COMMITTEES
SUBORDINATE TO THE KIND OF "INDEPENDENT KINGDOMS THEY ONCE
CONTROLLED AND MANIPULATED AS THEY PLEASED."
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